

SECRET INVASION

ABNETT LANNING PELLETIER MAGYAR GURU

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY™



MARVEL®

IN THE WAKE OF TWO CATASTROPHIC ANNIHILATION EVENTS, THE UNIVERSE IS IN A FRAGILE AND WEAKENED STATE. WITH THE FABRIC OF SPACE ITSELF DAMAGED, ANOMALOUS FISSURES ARE BEGINNING TO APPEAR, FISSURES THAT COULD CRACK AND SPREAD, COLLAPSING REALITY AND LETTING IN THINGS THAT SHOULD NOT EXIST IN OUR DIMENSION.

GUIDED BY THE MYSTICAL INSIGHT OF THE NEWLY RETURNED ADAM WARLOCK, THE GUN-SLINGING STAR-LORD HAS FORGED A PROACTIVE TEAM OF PROVEN COSMIC CHAMPIONS READY TO PROTECT THE VULNERABLE UNIVERSE AND PREVENT ANY LARGE-SCALE DISASTERS FROM EVER HAPPENING AGAIN. TOGETHER, STAR-LORD, WARLOCK, QUASAR, GAMORA, DRAX, MANTIS AND ROCKET RACCOON ARE THE...

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY



ON THEIR FIRST TWO MISSIONS TO PREVENT DAMAGE TO THE WALLS OF THE UNIVERSE, THE GUARDIANS CLASHED WITH THE MIGHTY UNIVERSAL CHURCH OF TRUTH, AN INTOLERANT AND ZEALOUS RELIGIOUS EMPIRE. BELIEVING THE GUARDIANS TO BE ANTI-CHURCH HERETICS, THE UCT DECREED STAR-LORD'S SQUAD TO BE ENEMIES OF THE FAITH.

DURING THEIR SECOND CLASH, THE GUARDIANS RESCUED A MAN CALLING HIMSELF VANCE ASTROVIK (A.K.A. MAJOR VICTORY) FROM A FROZEN MASS OF TIME. ALSO DURING THIS FIGHT, THE POWERFUL CARDINALS OF THE UCT STABBED ADAM WARLOCK, TAKING A TISSUE SAMPLE THAT THEY LATER ANALYZED TO CONFIRM HIS IDENTITY. THIS CONFIRMATION THROWS THE MATRIARCH OF THE CHURCH INTO DISMAY: IF ADAM WARLOCK IS WHO HE SAYS HE IS, WHAT LURKS IN THE STASIS COCOON HELD SACRED BY THE UCT?



STAR-LORD
(PETER QUILL)



ADAM
WARLOCK



QUASAR
(PHYLA-VELL)



GAMORA



DRAX



MANTIS



ROCKET

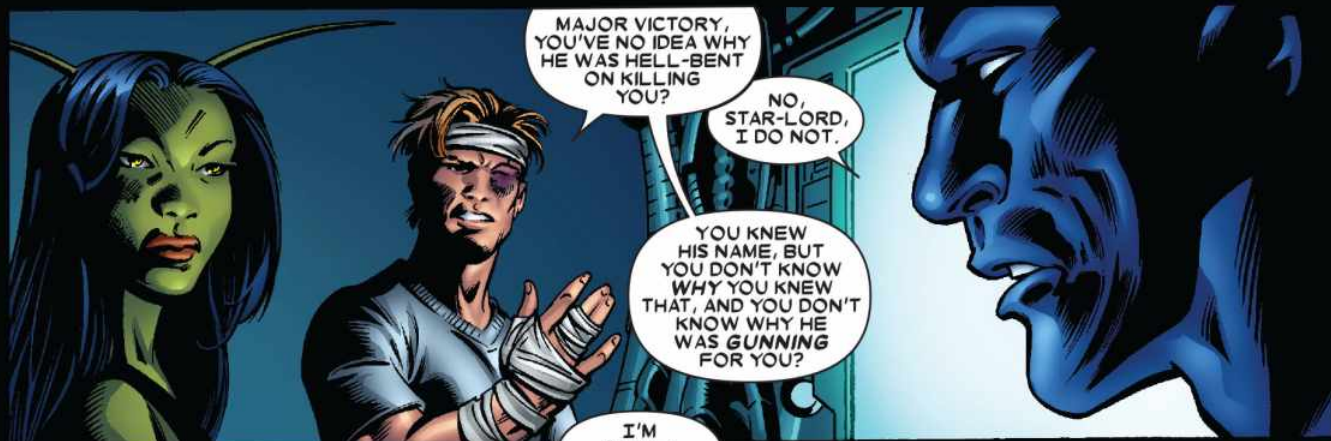


KNOWHERE,
GUARDIANS,
HEADQUARTERS...

STARHAWK,
HUH?

THAT
WOULD
APPEAR TO BE
THE ATTACKER'S
NAME, PETER.

AND
HE JUST
APPEARED OUT OF
THIN AIR, LAID YOU
OUT, MANTIS, AND
WENT FOR OUR
GUEST?



SOMEONE'S GOT
TO SAY IT. YOU SAY
YOU'RE SOME KIND
OF TEMPORAL
REFUGEE.

YOU CAN'T TELL US
ANYTHING ABOUT WHO
YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU CAME
FROM. AND WHAT'S THE
FIRST THING THAT HAPPENS
WHEN WE BRING
HIM HOME?

YOU GET
INTO A BRAWL
WITH A "MYSTERY
ATTACKER" AND
TRASH THE
JOINT.



DIDN'T YOU?
MAYBE YOU
DID AND YOU
JUST DON'T
REMEMBER?

ENOUGH,
ROCKET!

SO STARHAWK
WAS USING SOME
KIND OF PERSONAL
TELEPORT
SYSTEM,
RIGHT?

MAYBE
THE CONTINUUM
CORTEX WILL HAVE
SOME RECORD
OF ITS ENERGY
PROFILE...





...THE
ATTACKER
SEEMS TO HAVE GOT
HIMSELF ON AND OFF
KNOWHERE USING
HIS OWN TECH,
COSMO...

...BUT I
WAS WONDERING
IF HE PIGGY-
BACKED HIS SIGNAL
THROUGH THE
CORTEX.

DA, THAT
WOULD CERTAINLY
HAFF MADE HIS ACCESS
EASIER, COMRADE
STAR-LORD.

COME,
LET US BE
CHECKINK CORTEX
PATTERN
RECORDS.



YOU GOT
THE CONTINUUM
CORTEX FULLY
REPAIRED
NOW?

DA, DA! IT
WAS DAMAGED
PRETTY GOOD DURING
STARHAWK AND MAJOR
VICTORY'S FIGHT, BUT
LOYAL TECH CREWS HAFF
RESTORED FULL
FUNCTION.

COSMO
VERY PROUD
OF--

PETER!



MANTIS?
WHAT IS
IT?

DON'T!



DON'T
GO ANY
FURTHER!
GET BACK!



WHY?
WHAT THE
D'AST--

DAMAGES

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DEBRIEF LOG: MANTIS
(CELESTIAL MADONNA,
EMPATH, TELEPATH,
PYROKINETIC)

SOMETIMES
THE FUTURE
VISITS ME LIKE THAT.
COLD, SUDDEN,
UGLY.

I SAW IT.
I KNEW I HAD
JUST SECONDS
TO WARN
PETER.



HOW MANY?
HOW MANY
DEAD?



ADAM,
YOU SHOULD
BE RESTING.

I TOLD
HIM THAT.
HE WON'T
LISTEN TO ME,
PETER.

**KNOWHERE
SICKBAY...**

MY WOUND
IS HEALING,
PHYLA. DO NOT
CONCERN
YOURSELF.

NOW,
TELL ME.
HOW
MANY?

THIRTY-EIGHT DEAD,
NINE OF THEM
CORTEX OPERATORS.
FIFTEEN OTHERS
CRITICAL.

THE
BLAST TOOK
OUT THE ENTIRE
CORTEX CHAMBER.
NO ONE'S GOING TO BE
GOING IN OR OUT OF
KNOWHERE FOR
A WHILE.







OTHERS?

DID YOU
TAKE A DOUBLE
DOSE OF NAIVE
PILLS TODAY,
PETE?

UNTIL
WE KNOW
BETTER, WE'VE
GOT TO ASSUME
THERE ARE
MORE.

DISGUISED
INFILTRATORS,
RIGHT HERE
AMONGST US.
MAYBE EVEN IN
THIS ROOM.

OH,
COME
ON...



...MANTIS
WOULD--

IF THERE
ARE MORE SKRULLS
ONBOARD, THEY'RE
SOMEHOW SHIELDED TO
MY MENTAT POWERS.
EVERYONE HERE
BELIEVES WHO THEY
SAY THEY ARE.

OKAY,
BUT
ADAM--

I'M SORRY,
BUT THEY
ALSO SEEM TO BE
RESISTANT TO WHAT
YOU MIGHT CALL
MY MAGIC.



DRAX?
HELP ME
OUT HERE.

SON OF A
BABOON! COSMO?
TELEPATHY?

CAN'T.
SKRULLS
GOT NO
SCENT.

NYET,
COMRADE
STAR-LORD. I
CANNOT DETECT
THEM BY
TEEPING.



'COURSE, THAT'S
EXACTLY WHAT MISTER
COSMO WOULD
CLAIM...IF HE WAS
A SKRULL!

PLEASE TO
BE EXPLAININK,
COMRADE
RACCOON. WHY
YOU ARE ALWAYS
SO HOSTILE
TO COSMO?

I DUNNO.
MAYBE IT'S
BECAUSE I CAN'T
SHAKE THE FEELING
YOU'RE ABOUT TO
CHASE ME UP
A TREE.



OH, THIS IS JUVENILE!
IS THIS HOW WE'RE GOING TO
SPEND OUR DAY, SUSPECTING
ONE ANOTHER? SOWING
SEEDS OF DISSENT?

A WASTE
OF TIME, AND
FAR, FAR TOO
EASY!



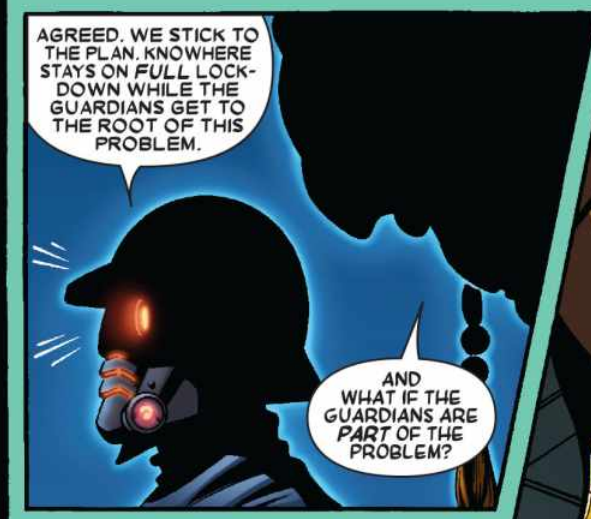


NO ONE'S DOUBTING YOU, GAMORA.

NO ONE'S DOUBTING ANYONE.

SKRULLS. EVERY TIME THEY MAKE A MOVE, THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS.

MISTRUST. FEAR. PARANOIA.



AGREED. WE STICK TO THE PLAN. KNOWHERE STAYS ON FULL LOCK-DOWN WHILE THE GUARDIANS GET TO THE ROOT OF THIS PROBLEM.

AND WHAT IF THE GUARDIANS ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM?



I'M SORRY. THE DOOR WAS OPEN.

I AM GORANI OF THE UUCHAN DELEGATION TO KNOWHERE, AND ELECTED CHAIRPERSON OF KNOWHERE'S ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL.

THIS IS MY COUNCIL DEPUTY, CYNOSURE, OF THE XARTHIAN PEACE-KEEPING DELEGATION.

WE WERE HAVING A PRIVATE DISCUSSION, DELEGATE GORANI.



KNOWHERE IS A SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY, SIR. DELEGATIONS FROM HUNDREDS OF RACES GATHER HERE, AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY COUNCIL RULES.

I DON'T REMEMBER YOUR VIGILANTE BAND ASKING PERMISSION TO SET UP SHOP HERE.

AND I CERTAINLY DON'T REMEMBER ANYONE SAYING THAT THE GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY WERE SUDDENLY RUNNING KNOWHERE.

PERHAPS I MISSED A MEETING.

CYNOSURE?
YOU'RE ONE OF
THE LUMINALS,
RIGHT?

NOVA
WARNED ME
ABOUT YOU. YOUR
STRIKEFORCE HARDLY
PLAYED BY COUNCIL
RULES WHEN YOU
BROUGHT THE
CREATURE ABYSS
ABOARD.*

THAT WAS
A REGRETTABLE
ERROR MADE BY MY
PREDECESSOR. HE
PAID WITH HIS LIFE,
AS DID MANY OF
THE LUMINALS.

CYNOSURE
IS A HEREDITARY
MANTLE. I AM HIS
REPLACEMENT. I
INTEND TO STICK
UNWAVERINGLY TO
KNOWHERE'S RULES
OF CONDUCT.

CYNOSURE
IS SIMPLY
EXPRESSING
THE COUNCIL'S
GENUINE
CONCERN.

A
PARAMILITARY
FORCE SETS
ITSELF UP
HERE, WITHOUT
INVITATION...

...AND WITHIN
DAYS WE HAVE
TWO POST-MORTAL
BEINGS FIGHTING IN
THE PUBLIC
LEVELS...

...THE
DESTRUCTION
OF THE CONTINUUM
CORTEX, WITH
TERRIBLE LOSS
OF LIFE...

...AND A
PRESUMED
SKRULL INFIL-
TRATION.

IT FEELS
AS IF YOU HAVE
BROUGHT THIS
TROUBLE
WITH YOU.

NONSENSE!
DELEGATE,
COSMO VOUCH FOR
THESE PEOPLE
PERSONALLY,
AND--

YOU ARE
SUPPOSED TO
BE CHIEF OF SECURITY,
COMRADE COSMO. YOU
ARE SUPPOSED TO
BE NEUTRAL.

I FEAR
YOU HAVE
THROWN YOUR
LOT IN WITH THEM
RATHER TOO
MUCH.

HE CAN
THROW HIS
LOT OUT AGAIN,
ANY TIME HE
LIKES.

*SEE NOVA #8 AND #9.
--BACK-ISSUE BILL.



LOOK, WE DON'T WANT TO MAKE THIS SITUATION ANY WORSE THAN IT ALREADY IS.

IF THE COUNCIL WANTS TO PLAY THIS BY THE BOOK, THAT'S FINE.

THIS TEAM WILL COOPERATE WITH ANY INVESTIGATION AND--

WE'LL WHAT?

LIKE IT OR NOT, WE'RE PART OF SOCIETY HERE, ADAM.

WE NEED TO LET COSMO AND THE SECURITY DEPARTMENT RUN THEIR INVESTIGATION AND--

NO. ABSOLUTELY NOT.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE FAR TOO SIGNIFICANT FOR US TO BE RESTRICTED BY MUNDANE PROTOCOLS.

THIS TEAM ANSWERS TO NO ONE! THAT'S WHAT WE AGREED!



SORRY, ADAM. I'M PULLING RANK.

YOU'RE WHAT?

PLEASE, NOT IN FRONT OF THE KIDS.

THIS IS SO COMPLETELY WRONG!

THE GUARDIANS WILL ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOUR COUNCIL WANTS TO ASK.

YOUR COOPERATION IS NOTED, SIR. WE--

ONE MOMENT...

...WE'RE GETTING REPORTS OF A DISTURBANCE ON THE MARKETPLACE LEVEL.

COSMO TO SECURITY TEAMS! SCRAMBLE!





LET'S CUT IT OFF HIM AND SEE IF HE BLEEDS SKRULL!



PLEASE! DON'T DO THIS!

GOOOOOGG!

KTANGG

WAKOON

WHUFF!

APLIGHN!





THAT'S
RIGHT.
PLAYTIME'S
OVER.

GET LOST
BEFORE I
ORDER SECURITY
TO BOOK EVERY
LAST ONE OF
YOU.

YOU.
STAY DOWN,
OR I'LL--

TOUCH
HIM AGAIN AND
I'LL TURN THAT
BATON INTO A
CONCEALED
WEAPON.

THIS MAN
IS UNDER MY
PROTECTION.

SOME JOB
YOU'RE DOING.
THIS IS THE **SECOND**
TIME HE'S BEEN
INVOLVED IN
VIOLENCE.



OW!

RRRAFFF!

**COSMO
BREAKS UP
FIGHTS, NOT
EITHER OF
YOU.**

GAH!

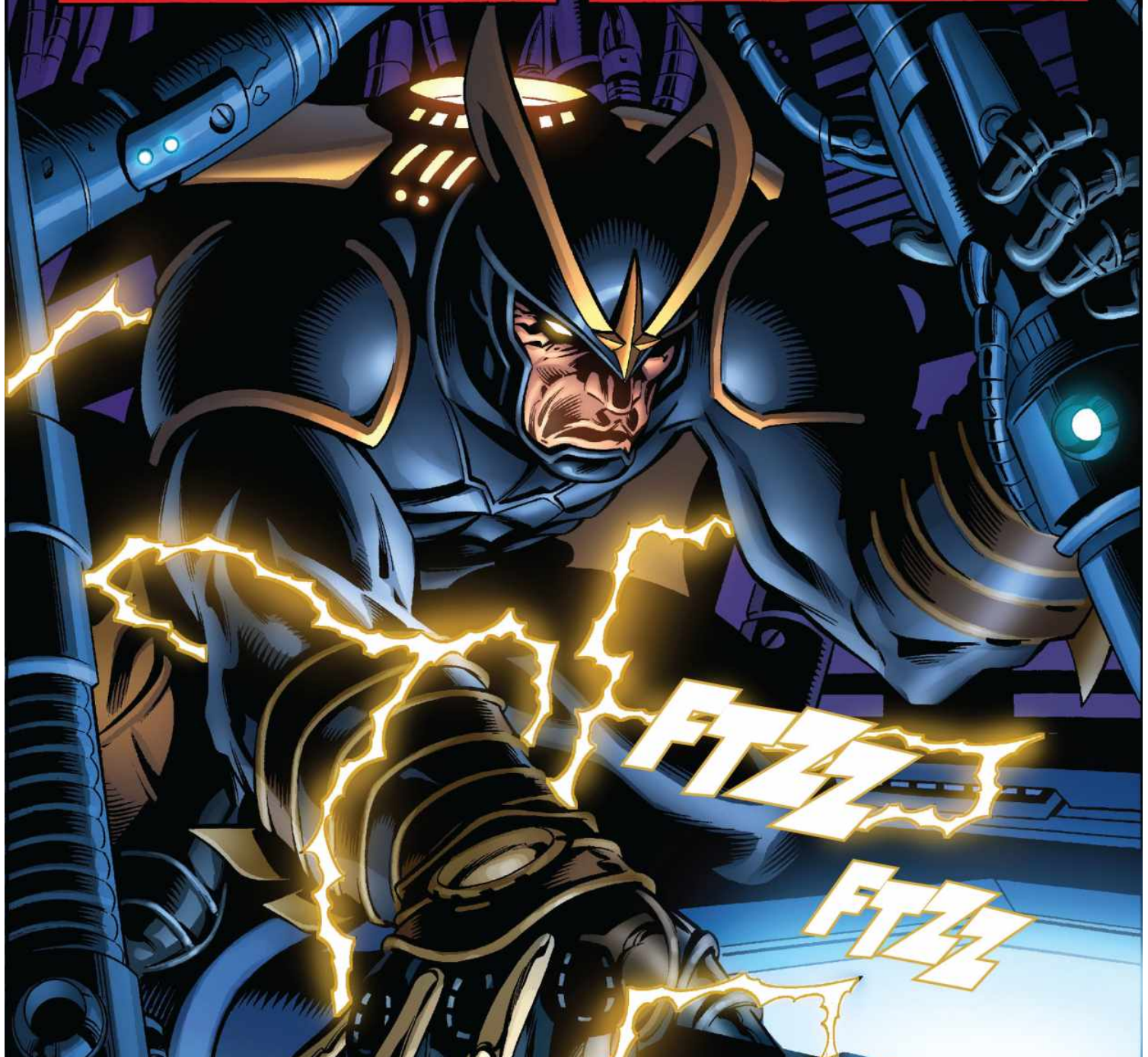
SORRY,
COSMO. WON'T
HAPPEN
AGAIN.



MY
APOLOGIES,
SECURITY
CHIEF.

**COSMO IS
SORRY TOO,
COMRADE STAR-LORD.
COSMO MUST ASK YOU TO
CONFINE YOUR TEAM AND
YOUR GUEST TO YOUR
QUARTERS FOR
TIME BEING.**









...THE CORTEX IS ALSO LEAKING TELEPORT RADIATION INTO KNOWHERE.

UNLESS THE TECHS CAN **REPAIR** IT, IT WILL POISON THE AIR, THE WATER SUPPLY AND...US. TERMINALLY.

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME.



PETER, IF WE SUBMIT TO AN INVESTIGATION, THE **TRUTH** MAY COME OUT.

YOU KNOW **VERY WELL** WHAT I AM REFERRING TO.

TRUTH?



OH, RIGHT. THAT.

WE HAD TO DO IT, MANTIS. I HAD TO GET THE TEAM TOGETHER AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.

WE COULDN'T WASTE TIME WAITING FOR PEOPLE TO "THINK THINGS THROUGH" OR "CONSIDER THEIR OPTIONS." WE--



COME ON, MANTIS. YOU MAKE IT SOUND **WORSE** THAN IT WAS. IT WAS JUST TO GET THINGS ROLLING SMOOTHLY WITHOUT--

IF THEY FIND OUT, ALL **TRUST** WILL BE DESTROYED.

THAT WOULD BE **BAD ENOUGH**. BUT, PETER, HAVE YOU CONSIDERED...



...WHAT IF ONE OF THEM **IS** A SKRULL?



**COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
KNOWHERE...**

THANK
YOU BOTH FOR
ATTENDING.

WE WILL
BE INTERVIEWING
ALL THE MEMBERS
OF YOUR TEAM
IN TURN.

IT IS
SOMETHING
OF A MAVERICK
OUTFIT, ISN'T
IT?



COSMO
THINK WE CONFINE
QUESTIONS TO
CRISIS AT HAND,
LUMINAL.

COMRADE
STAR-LORD IS
NOT HERE TO
DEFEND HIS
CHOICE OF
RECRUITS.

I THINK IT'S
RELEVANT.

AT LEAST
TWO OF YOUR
TEAM ARE WANTED
KILLERS. GAMORA,
THE ASSASSIN.

AND THIS
ONE...

...DRAX, ALSO
CALLED THE
DESTROYER.



COME ON!
DRAX HAS
TURNED HIS LIFE
AROUND! HE'S NOT
THE MAN HE ONCE
WAS!

HE
LOST HIS
DAUGHTER,
FOR PAMA'S
SAKE!

QUASAR'S
RIGHT. HE'S TOO
EASY A TARGET
FOR A WITCH-
HUNT.

I TRUST
DRAX.



DO YOU? REVIEW
THE FOOTAGE
STORED ON THAT
DEVICE.

YOU WILL FIND
SECURITY VIEWER
FEEDS SHOWING DRAX
MAKING VISITS TO THE
CONTINUUM CORTEX
CHAMBER.

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.

COSMO
MOST REGRET,
COMRADE,
IS BEING
TRUE.

SINCE YOUR
TEAM CAME TO
KNOWHERE, DRAX HAS
BEEN RECORDED MAKING
TWENTY-SIX VISITS
TO CORTEX, ALL
UNAUTHORIZED, ALL
UNLOGGED.



"OH D'AST!
THEN WHERE THE
HELL IS HE?"



